

**Amendments to the Claims**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior listings, and versions, of the claims in this application.

Listing of Claims

1-2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously presented) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 31, wherein a ratio of the second spacing frequency of CD strands to the first spacing frequency of MD strands is about 0.9 (CD) to 1.0 (MD).

4. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 3 wherein the ratio is about 0.75 (CD) to 1.0 (MD).

5. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the ratio is about 0.5 (CD) to 1.0 (MD).

6. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 3, wherein the reduced frequency range of CD strands is about 0.9 to 0.5 relative to the frequency of MD strands at 1.0.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously presented) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 31, wherein the machine direction of the scrim member has end zones and a central zone, and said second spacing frequency of CD strands being provided in said central zone.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously presented) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 32, wherein a strand diameter ratio of the CD strand diameter to the MD strand diameter is less than about 0.95.

11. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 10, wherein the strand diameter ratio is less than about 0.9.

12. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 11, wherein the strand diameter ratio is less than about 0.75.

13. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 12, wherein the strand diameter ratio is less than about 0.5.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously presented) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 31, wherein at least some of said CD strands are generally elliptical in cross-section and have major and minor axes, the minor axis being arranged substantially normal to a plane of the MD strands.

16. (Previously presented) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 15 wherein the MD strands are generally elliptical in cross-section, having major and minor axes, the minor axes of the CD strands being on average of a lesser dimension than the minor axes of the MD strands.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously presented) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 34 wherein the CD strands are at least one of

notched, abraded and compressed at predetermined places between preselected MD strands to provide the weakened points.

19. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 18, wherein the weakened points on one of the CD strands are offset in the cross direction from the weakened points on an adjacent CD strand.

20. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 18, wherein the weakened points are reduced in at least one transverse dimension of the CD strands as compared to other parts of the CD strands.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously presented) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 34 wherein the CD strands contain an additive which forms the weakened points.

23. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 22 wherein the additive is calcium carbonate.

24-26. (Canceled)

27. (Previously presented) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 31 wherein the absorbent article is a disposable garment.

28. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 27 wherein the absorbent article is a diaper.

29. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 27 wherein the absorbent article is a child's training pants.

30. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 27 wherein the absorbent article is one of an adult incontinence diaper, adult incontinence pad, adult incontinence pant and adult incontinence undergarment.

31. (Currently amended) An absorbent article for absorbing body fluids comprising an absorbent core being at least partially made of fibers and constructed and arranged for receiving and holding such fluids and including a reinforcing scrim member intimately associated with the absorbent core to maintain its structural integrity in use, said scrim member comprising a network of machine direction (MD) strands extending in a machine direction, and cross direction (CD) strands extending in a cross direction, at least some of said MD strands and CD strands crossing over each other and being interconnected, the MD strands and the CD strands cooperatively defining a plurality of openings in the scrim member, said MD strands being selected and formed to provide a predetermined stiffness and strength in supporting said absorbent core in the machine direction, and said CD strands being selected and formed with at least one characteristic difference from said MD strands to provide a stiffness of the absorbent core in the cross direction that is less than said stiffness of the absorbent core in the machine direction, wherein the MD strands are elongate and are spaced according to a first spacing frequency, and at least some of said CD strands have as a characteristic difference a second spacing frequency different from the first spacing frequency of the MD strands, the second spacing frequency of the CD strands being varied in different zones of

the elongate MD strands to provide a variance in stiffness between such zones, the scrim member being attached to the absorbent core through ~~at least one of: entanglement of the fibers with the scrim member; entanglement of fibers with other fibers entangled with the scrim member; and entanglement of fibers with each other where at least one of the entangled fibers~~ passes pass through ~~the~~ said scrim member openings.

32. (Previously presented) An absorbent article for absorbing body fluids comprising an absorbent core being at least partially made of fibers and constructed and arranged for receiving and holding such fluids and including a reinforcing scrim member intimately associated with the absorbent core to maintain its structural integrity in use, said scrim member comprising a network of machine direction (MD) strands extending in a machine direction, and cross direction (CD) strands extending in a cross direction, at least some of said MD strands and CD strands crossing over each other and being interconnected, said MD strands being selected and formed to provide a predetermined stiffness and strength in supporting said absorbent core in the machine direction, and said CD strands being selected and formed with at least one characteristic difference from said MD strands to provide a stiffness of the absorbent core in the cross direction that is less than said stiffness of the absorbent core in the machine direction, wherein said MD strands each have a strand diameter, and wherein said CD strands each have as a characteristic difference a strand diameter less than said MD strand diameter, the scrim member being attached to the absorbent core through at least one of: entanglement of the fibers with the scrim member; entanglement of fibers with other fibers entangled with the scrim member; and entanglement of fibers with each other where

at least one of the entangled fibers passes through the scrim member.

33. (Previously presented) An absorbent article for absorbing body fluids comprising an absorbent core being at least partially made of fibers and constructed and arranged for receiving and holding such fluids and including a reinforcing scrim member intimately associated with the absorbent core to maintain its structural integrity in use, said scrim member comprising a network of machine direction (MD) strands extending in a machine direction, and cross direction (CD) strands extending in a cross direction, at least some of said MD strands and CD strands crossing over each other and being interconnected, said MD strands being selected and formed to provide a predetermined stiffness and strength in supporting said absorbent core in the machine direction, and said CD strands being selected and formed with at least one characteristic difference from said MD strands to provide a stiffness of the absorbent core in the cross direction that is less than said stiffness of the absorbent core in the machine direction, wherein both of said MD strands and said CD strands are round in cross-section, the CD strands being smaller in cross-section than the MD strands, the scrim member being attached to the absorbent core through at least one of: entanglement of the fibers with the scrim member; entanglement of fibers with other fibers entangled with the scrim member; and entanglement of fibers with each other where at least one of the entangled fibers passes through the scrim member.

34. (Previously presented) An absorbent article for absorbing body fluids comprising an absorbent core being at least partially made of fibers and constructed and arranged for

receiving and holding such fluids and including a reinforcing scrim member intimately associated with the absorbent core to maintain its structural integrity in use, said scrim member comprising a network of machine direction (MD) strands extending in a machine direction, and cross direction (CD) strands extending in a cross direction, at least some of said MD strands and CD strands crossing over each other and being interconnected, said MD strands being selected and formed to provide a predetermined stiffness and strength in supporting said absorbent core in the machine direction, and said CD strands being selected and formed with at least one characteristic difference from said MD strands to provide a stiffness of the absorbent core in the cross direction that is less than said stiffness of the absorbent core in the machine direction, wherein the network of MD strands and CD strands is formed with at least some of the CD strands being continuous and having weakened points along their lengths to enhance buckling, the scrim member being attached to the absorbent core through at least one of: entanglement of the fibers with the scrim member; entanglement of fibers with other fibers entangled with the scrim member; and entanglement of fibers with each other where at least one of the entangled fibers passes through the scrim member.

35. (Previously presented) An absorbent article for absorbing body fluids comprising an absorbent core constructed and arranged for receiving and holding such fluids and including a reinforcing scrim member intimately associated with the absorbent core to maintain its structural integrity in use, said scrim member comprising a network of machine direction (MD) strands extending in a machine direction, and cross direction (CD) strands extending in a cross direction, at least some of

said MD strands and CD strands crossing over each other and being interconnected, said MD strands being selected and formed to provide a predetermined stiffness and strength in supporting said absorbent core in the machine direction, and said CD strands being selected and formed with at least one characteristic difference from said MD strands to provide a stiffness of the absorbent core in the cross direction that is less than said stiffness of the absorbent core in the machine direction, wherein the network of MD strands and CD strands is formed with at least some of the CD strands having weakened points along their lengths to enhance buckling, the CD strands being at least one of notched, abraded and compressed at predetermined places between preselected ones of the MD strands to provide the weakened points, and wherein the weakened points on the CD strands are cut through, and such weakened points on one CD strand are offset from the weakened points on an adjacent CD strand.

36. (Previously presented) An absorbent article for absorbing body fluids comprising an absorbent core being at least partially made of fibers and constructed and arranged for receiving and holding such fluids and including a reinforcing scrim member intimately associated with the absorbent core to maintain its structural integrity in use, said scrim member comprising a network of machine direction (MD) strands extending in a machine direction, and cross direction (CD) strands extending in a cross direction, at least some of said MD strands and CD strands crossing over each other and being interconnected, said MD strands being selected and formed to provide a predetermined stiffness and strength in supporting said absorbent core in the machine direction, and said CD strands being selected and formed with at least one



characteristic difference from said MD strands to provide a stiffness of the absorbent core in the cross direction that is less than said stiffness of the absorbent core in the machine direction, wherein the CD strand is corrugated and forms peaks and valleys along the cross direction thereof, said MD strands being arranged to engage the CD strands across the peaks and valleys thereof, the scrim member being attached to the absorbent core through at least one of: entanglement of the fibers with the scrim member; entanglement of fibers with other fibers entangled with the scrim member; and entanglement of fibers with each other where at least one of the entangled fibers passes through the scrim member.

37. (Previously presented) An absorbent article for absorbing body fluids comprising an absorbent core being at least partially made of fibers and constructed and arranged for receiving and holding such fluids and including a reinforcing scrim member intimately associated with the absorbent core to maintain its structural integrity in use, said scrim member comprising a network of machine direction (MD) strands extending in a machine direction, and cross direction (CD) strands extending in a cross direction, at least some of said MD strands and CD strands crossing over each other and being interconnected, said MD strands being selected and formed to provide a predetermined stiffness and strength in supporting said absorbent core in the machine direction, and said CD strands being selected and formed with at least one characteristic difference from said MD strands to provide a stiffness of the absorbent core in the cross direction that is less than said stiffness of the absorbent core in the machine direction, wherein the CD strands are woven under and over the MD strands, the scrim member being attached to the absorbent

core through at least one of: entanglement of the fibers with the scrim member; entanglement of fibers with other fibers entangled with the scrim member; and entanglement of fibers with each other where at least one of the entangled fibers passes through the scrim member.

38. (New) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 31 wherein the scrim member is attached to the absorbent core through entanglement of at least some fibers of the absorbent core with the CD strands of the scrim member and at least some other fibers of the absorbent core with the MD strands of the scrim member.